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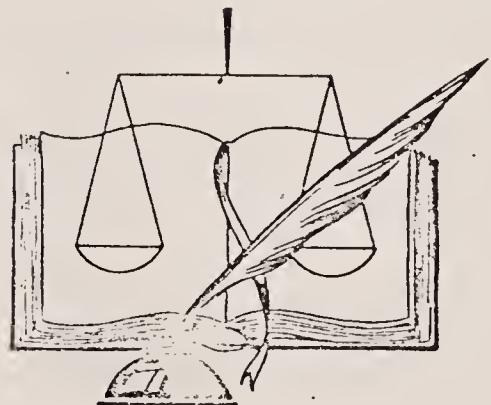
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Ault, Helene B.  
The Hon. John Read,  
gentleman, 1679-1749



*The Hon. JOHN READ Gentleman*

1679



1749

PRESENTED BY HELENE B. AULT

BEFORE THE REDDING HISTORY CLUB

-1942-

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## FOREWORD

Mrs. Helene B. Ault presented before the Redding History Club this paper on "The Hon. John Read, Gentleman", first settler of Redding, Connecticut and an eminent lawyer in Massachusetts Province where he died in 1749.

Correspondence with the Custodian of Harvard College archives, Mr. Clifford K. Shipton, brought a gracious response with some new data from Massachusetts; also helpful and quoted freely here, was an earlier address delivered in 1886 by Mr. Isaac Beers, who in that year lived adjacent to the land where John Read was born in 1679, son of William Read and Deborah Baldwin.

\* \* \*



The snow does not last long in Fairfield. It is probable that the day of John Read's birth in January, 1679, was mild and beautiful, with those misty shades which dimly reveal Long Island across the smooth expanse of water south of the salt meadows.

Since the Pequots had been decisively defeated in 1675, Fairfield had settled down into the tranquil village which it has been to this day. Founded in 1639 by men from Hartford and New Haven Colonies, the Town had been laid out in orderly blocks, with wide avenues cut through the primeval forest trees. In the very heart of the settlement was the old Westcott home where John's mother, Deborah Baldwin, had been born in 1652; but John's place of birth was probably at "CALVES' PASTURE", a 3-acre farm which his father, William Read, had bought in 1673 from Cornelius Hull -- part of an original grant given by the Town to Hull in 1653. (See Vol. A, pages 35 and 214.)

Later on, in 1786, William Read did acquire the former place, belonging to his wife's kin, and John grew up in that more pretentious old home, and inherited both places. The Baldwin home had been built very early by Richard Westcott, an original settler, whose widow, Joanna, had brought this home to her second husband, Nathaniel Baldwin, (before 1650), and then to her third husband, Thomas Skidmore. By subsequent transfers, it came to William Read -- but not until John was seven years old.



This later home was better placed, being on the main Highway (now the Old Post Road), opposite the (present) old Academy, and near the Town Church and the residence of the minister, The Rev. Samuel Wakeman, a Harvard man, who was also probably the best qualified, if not the only tutor at that time.

In Book A of the Town Records was entered the simple statement: "John Read, the son of William Read, was born the 29th day of January, 1679". Reversing the large volume, we come upon a deed of gift, whereby the father, William Read, although he did not die for four years later on, did in 1693 seek to secure to his only son, John Read, all his estate. (A-188) Sept. 2, 1693.

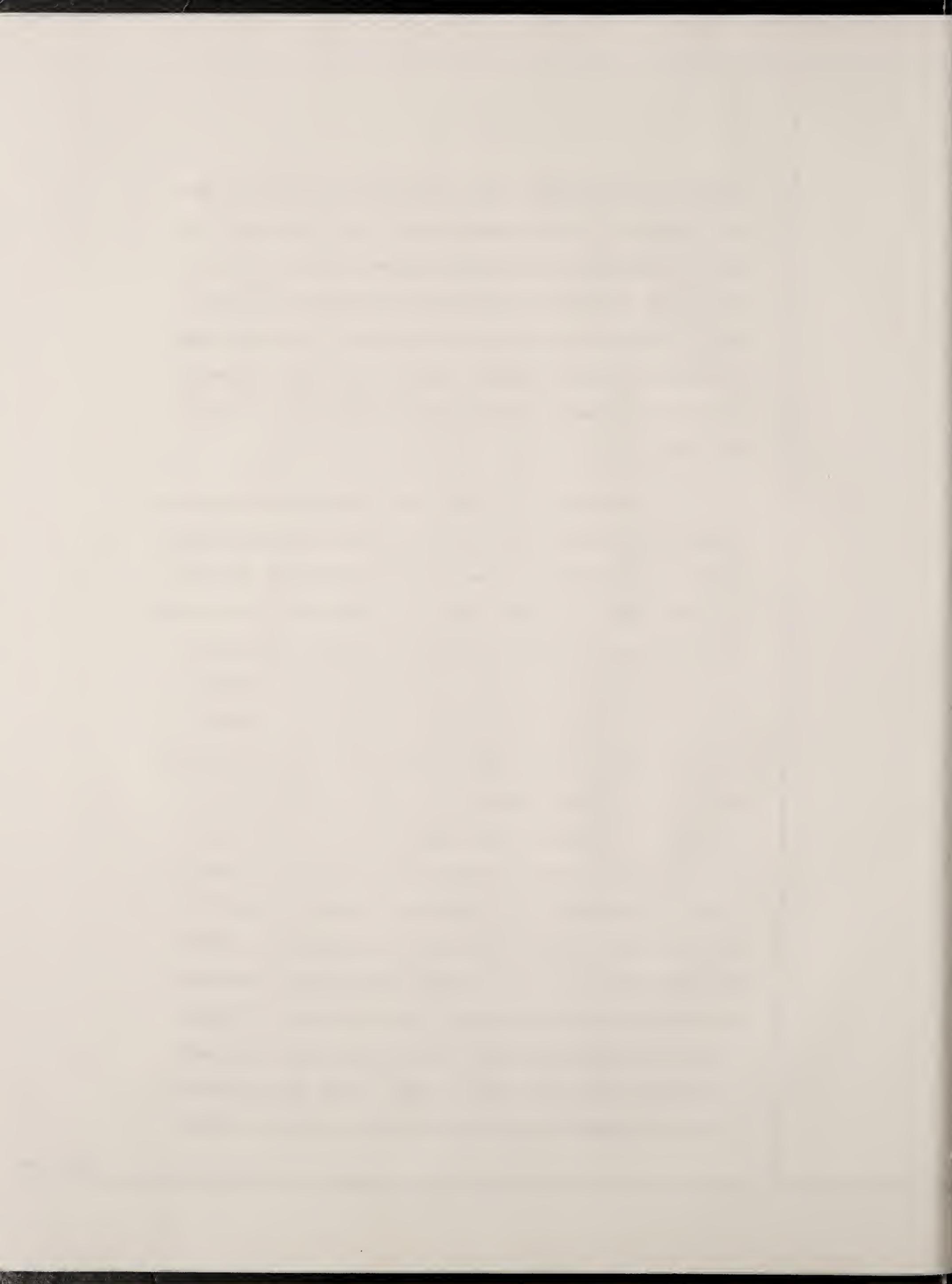
Although John was only fourteen then, and about to go far off to school, William Read drew up the desired division of his lands, certain meadows for Sara and Abigail, his daughters, and the record states: "All other lands, meadows, house, barn, orchards and fences are to go to my loving son, John Read".

Raised in an environment reflecting the simple existence of his time -- (that of Charles II; Edmond Andros was then in New York Colony; William Penn was just founding Pennsylvania), John Read had a background both tender and substantial. He lost his young mother, Deborah Read, when he was but a child; but she had not only a brother, Samuel Baldwin, and a sister, Sara (wife of Joseph Barlow), but her father and mother had each had four



children by previous marriages, and no doubt all cared for the three children of Deborah Read until the father remarried. The Baldwin family had come from Buckinghamshire to early Milford, Connecticut, and thence to Fairfield where Deborah's father, Nathaniel Baldwin, brought his four children and married Joanna, the widow of Richard Westcott, whose own four children married and removed to Stamford, Connecticut and Bedford, N. Y. and to New Jersey.

John Read's own uncle, Samuel Baldwin, was (to quote a member of his own family), "a man of powerful but uncultivated mind", who appreciating his own lack of opportunities moved to New Haven where his children could have advantages of the "highest kind", and he was rewarded by numbering among his descendants several notable men -- a Member of Congress, a U. S. Senator, a University President (Abraham Baldwin of Georgia), a Speaker of the First House in Ohio; (Ruth Baldwin, wife of our Joel Barlow, came from the Michael Baldwin line.) Some of this thirst for knowledge -- certainly a great respect for knowledge, must have been implanted in young John Read, as he was sent, when only 14, to far off Cambridge to be educated at Harvard. No doubt as a boy he had been tutored in Fairfield, probably by the minister, Rev. Samuel Wakeman. We can imagine that he swam in the Sound, and sailed with others between Milford and Stamford on family visits. He had probably been over in Long Island, where many Fairfield families were taking up land. If he spent vacations at home in Fairfield from far off Boston, he may have explored

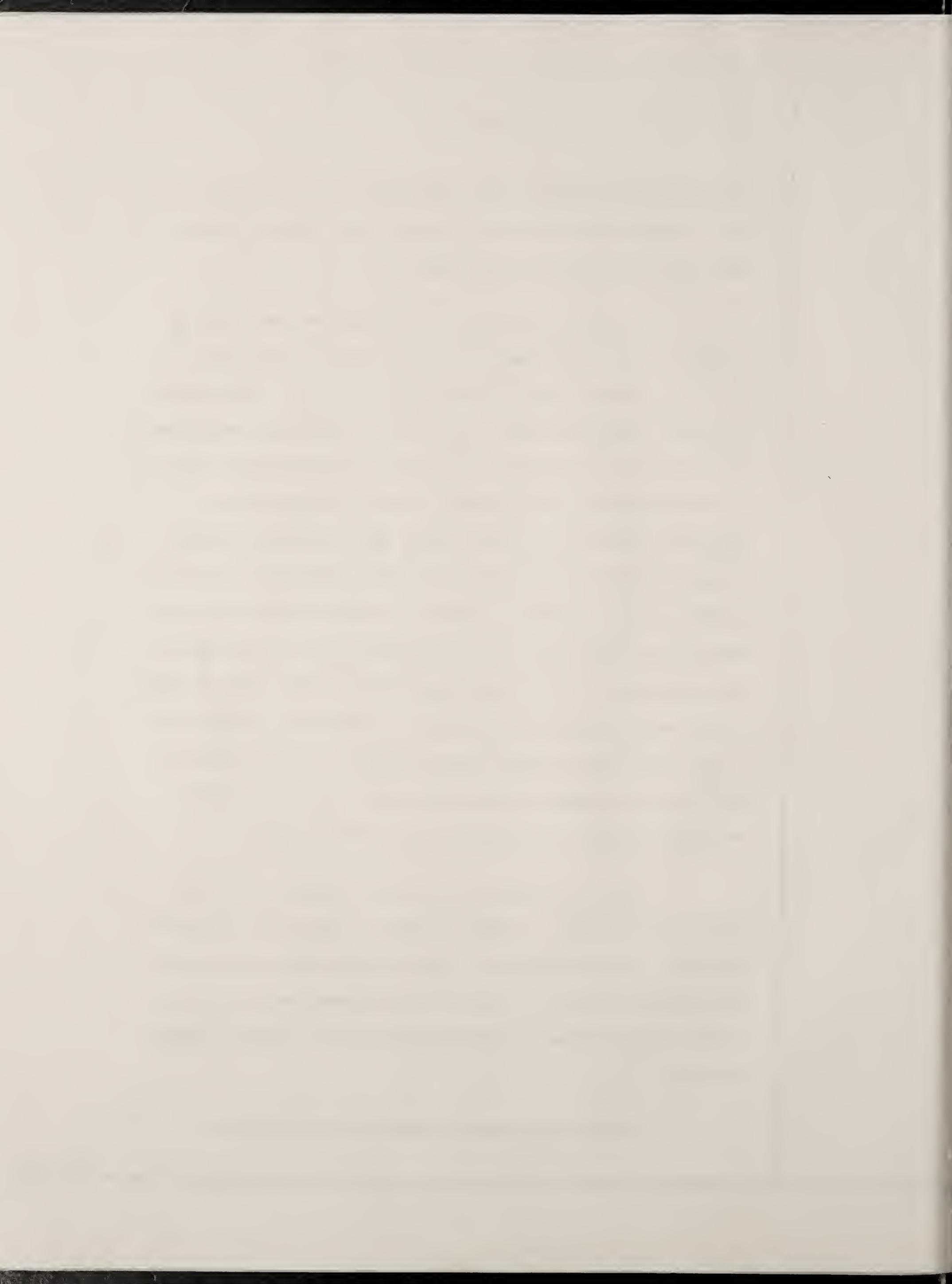


the watercourses inland as far as Hartford, or gone on foot or by horse to Danbury, founded when he was but ten by Norwalk families and still new and exciting territory.

Who can say what were the horizons and the dreams of a youth in this magnificent unspoiled wilderness where every hill top, arduously gained, spread out visions of new and beautiful stretches of unclaimed land! This was John Read's real background -- love of the land, and the accompanying procedure of punctiliously recorded documents as the land was acquired, transferred or inherited. He was born to be a lawyer, not a minister, but for a time the family decisions and environment prevailed; so John Read in 1693 was sent to Harvard. There was then no Yale at hand, yet perhaps the inspiration for this important step came from men who did found Yale; for if William Read and John visited their kinfolks in Milford, they were probably vastly influenced by that fine old pastor, Rev. Samuel Andrews, who (a graduate himself of Harvard in 1675) had come to Milford to a charge which was to last fifty years and in 1701, he and others did form Yale College.

At this period, of course, all ministers had to come from Harvard College. In 1693 William and Mary College in Virginia received a charter brought over that year by Edmond Andros who was then coming to take over for James II the government in Virginia, lately recovered from a series of poor (and often absent) administrators.

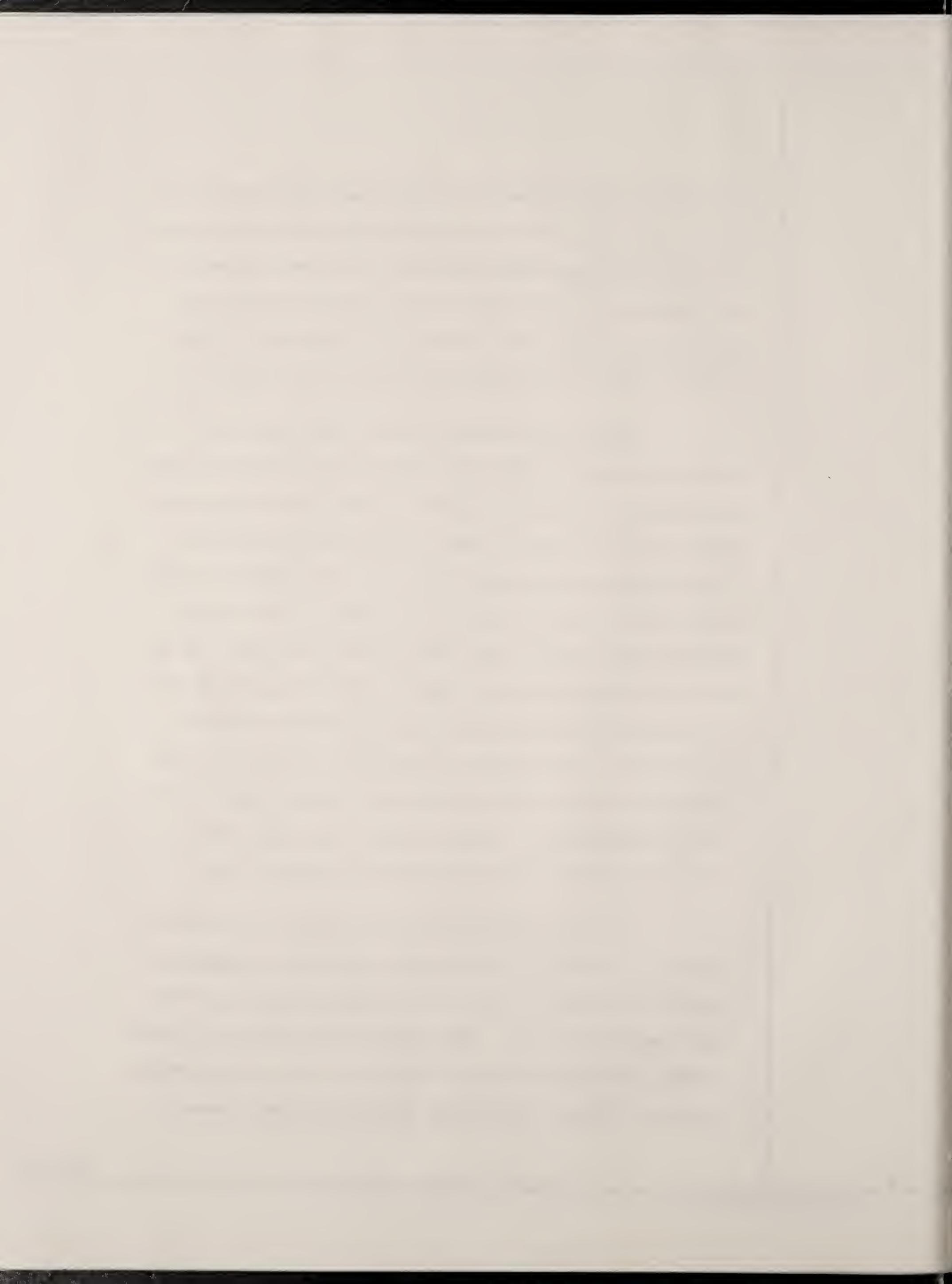
At any rate, this motherless lad left the home of



his father in Fairfield and traveled (we wonder how) to the great metropolis in Boston and entered a new world and this is no figure of speech, for Massachusetts (that largest and most independent of New England Colonies) was just recovering from the blackest and most staggering pages of her history, and to understand the new world upon which John Read entered, we go back a few years.

We have heard from Mr. Dillon of the distinctly different concepts of government which evolved in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Connecticut, relatively less troubled by external events, had become more and more democratic in processes; but Massachusetts (growing greater through her world traffic and seaports) had still held, as far as she was able, to the original theocratic ideals wherein only church members could vote. It had become increasingly difficult, however, to hold English-bred men to this idea, while asking them to join in the common defense and pay taxes -- and in fact, 13 years earlier, liberal thinkers had seceded from the strict orthodox First Church in Boston and set up the Old South Church. Only the danger coming upon them from Charles II in 1686-9, forced a reconciliation between them.

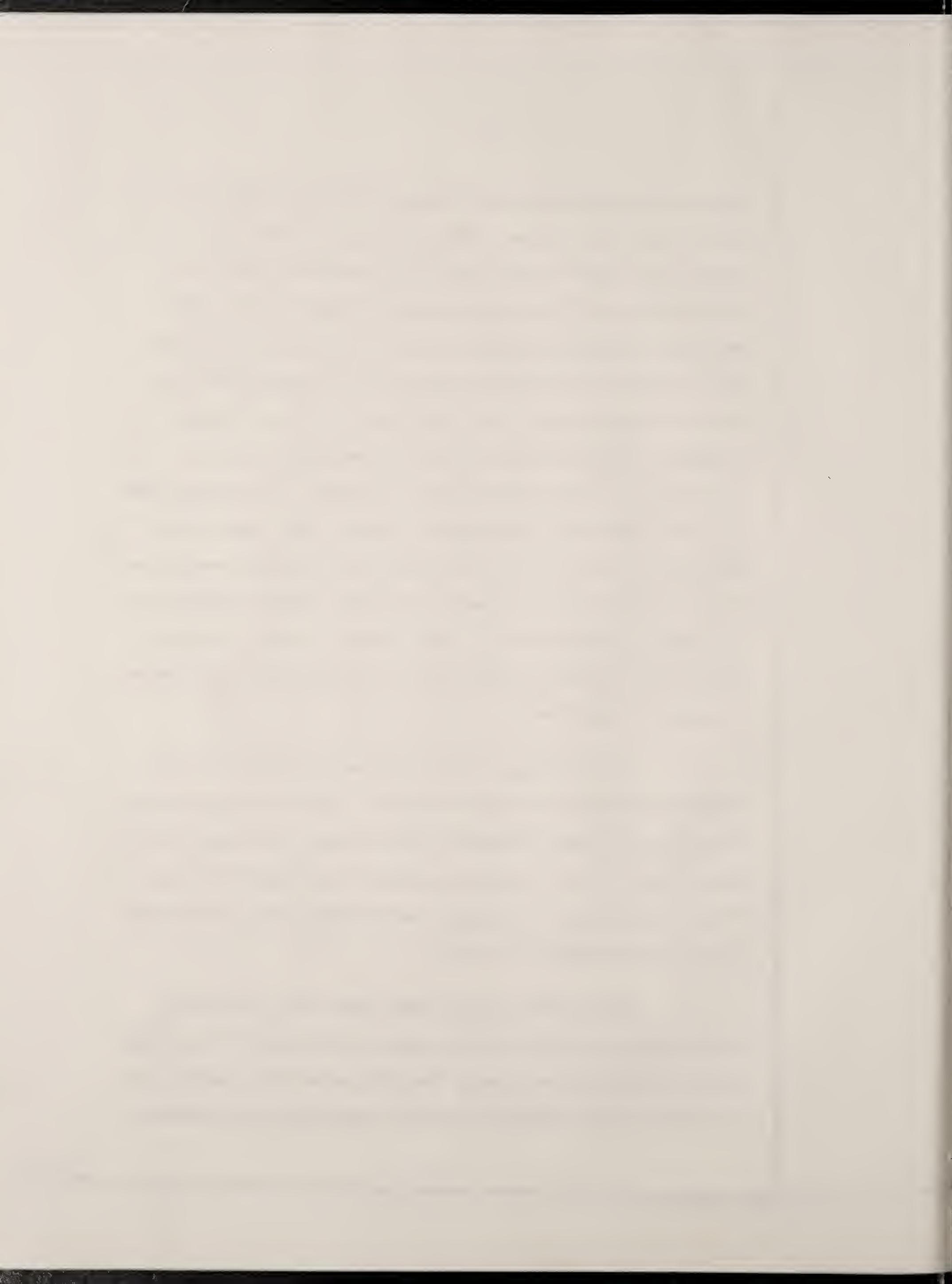
For years Massachusetts had agreed to a few edicts from Charles II and had diplomatically postponed action on others until they could be ignored in time. But now England found excuse for many unsettled grievances. James II (following his Stuart brother in 1685) sent Edmond Andros over and he and a few quislings really carried out orders. They had gone through many County Towns in



England and gathered back their Charters and now, in 1687, they did the same in New England. Plymouth Colony had never had a charter, so it was at once annexed to Massachusetts Colony. The private charters of Maine and New Hampshire were annulled. They were taken from Massachusetts and made Crown Colonies to the King. Rhode Island and Connecticut had their charters annulled but they were not put into effect. New Haven Colony, -- that "theocratic offshoot" of Massachusetts, was dissolved and thrown into the "ungodly arms of Connecticut Colony" at Hartford. But Massachusetts was to be humbled into resigning her charter. Not a hand in the Assembly was raised to do so; so Edmond Andros formally revoked the charter and furthermore, dissolved the General Court (comparable to our losing our Supreme Court). From Delaware to Maine, the whole sweep of New England was made to feel a servitude never known before, or since, by Englishmen.

But Providence, which in 1685 had interposed in behalf of Massachusetts by carrying off Charles II with a stroke, now again saved the day in 1689 through word from England, that James II had been deposed by the long-suffering English who had endured enough from the Stuarts, and had brought over William and Mary from Orange to be their new Protestant rulers.

Edmond Andros who had spent three years in Boston (a faithful servant of James II as a soldier under orders) was promptly jailed and returned to England. The old charter was re-instated and ex-Governor Simon Bradstreet recalled to administer the government.

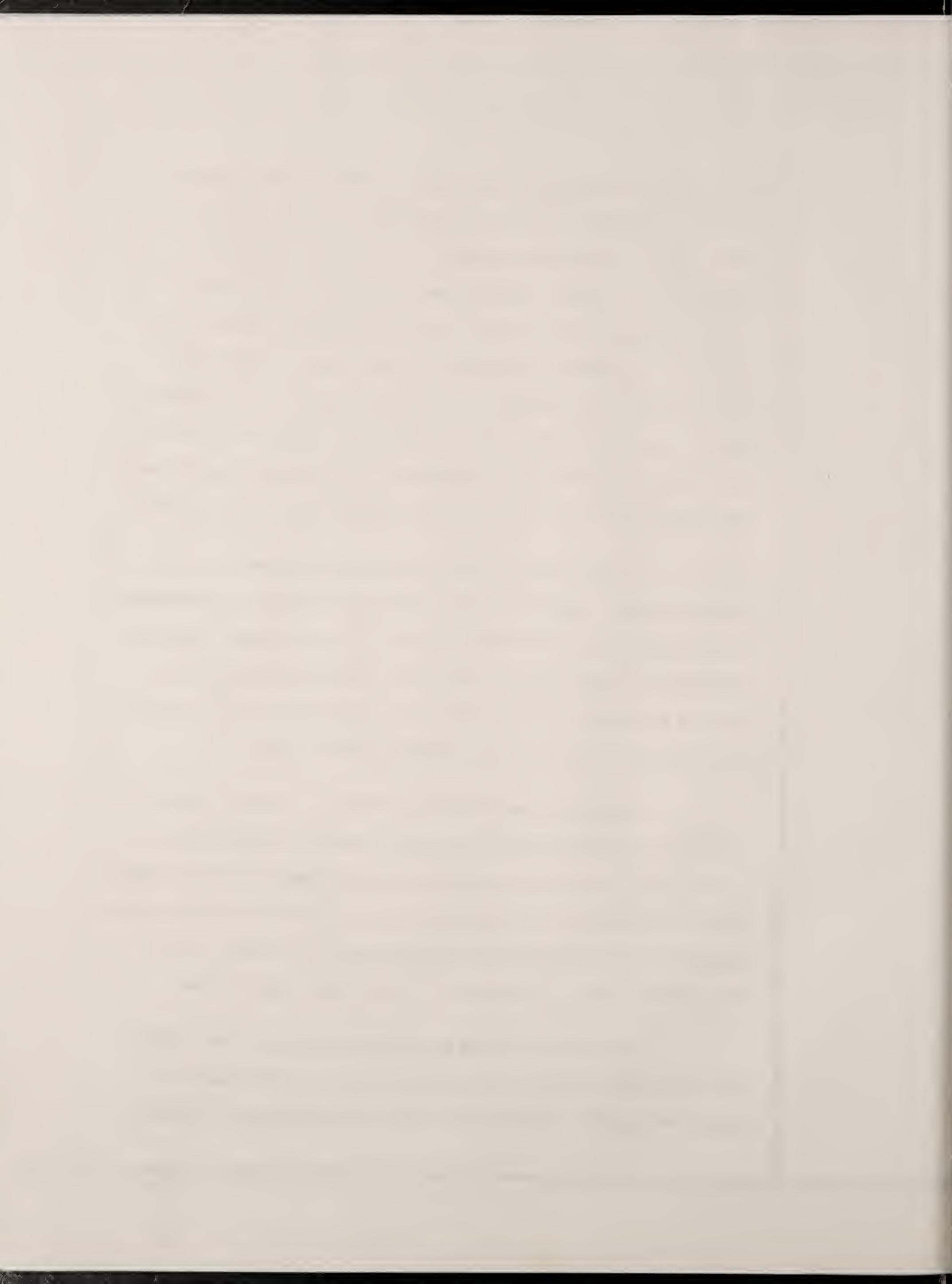


This capable old gentleman was 86, born in 1603 in Lincolnshire, graduate of Cambridge in England, Secretary to the Earl of Warwick and a capable administrator during his life time. His wife was a daughter of ex-Governor Thomas Dudley, the Elder, both of these Governors being ancestors of our ex-President Herbert Hoover. With the crisis in government miraculously passed, Massachusetts had next experienced the dreadful witchcraft delusion which had engulfed Salem and nearby sections. But, by this year of our Lord 1692, the pious leaders (including Judge Sewall and Cotton Mather) had recovered their sanity and were tearfully acknowledging their remorse in public.

It was, then, the following year, 1693, that our Connecticut boy, John Read, entered College at Newtown, now Cambridge, where in 1696 he finished 7th in a class of 14. No doubt, the broad experience of these formative years had much to do with his later life and contributed to his return later from the life of a Connecticut Squire to the forum of the country's busiest city.

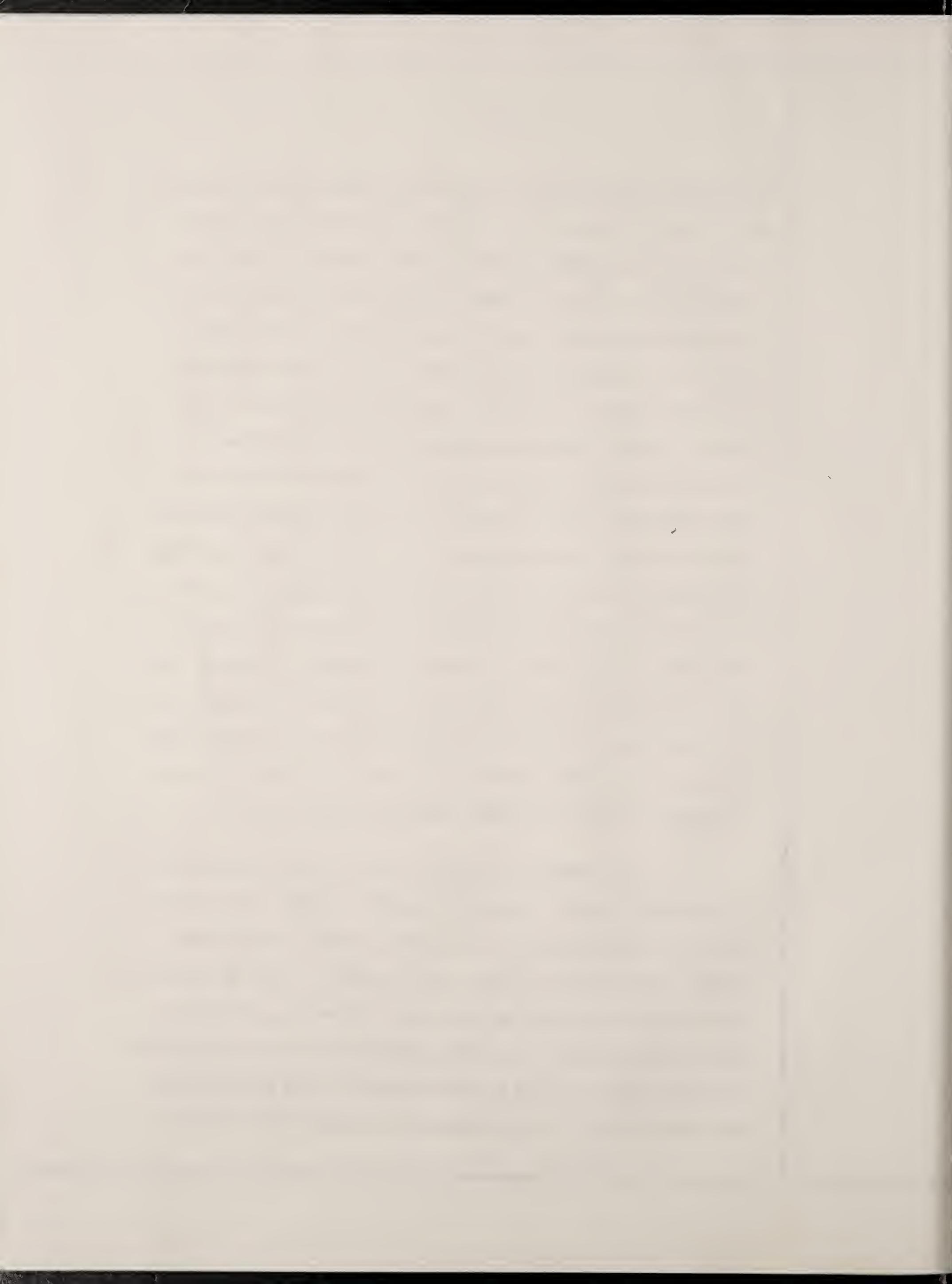
He saw here two churches existing in Boston -- one, the established Episcopal Church forced upon Boston by Andros, and he probably read many speeches against tyranny and heard notable sermons. There is no doubt but that John Read lived in the midst of great minds and great times and absorbed a greater breadth of vision in these three years. For us, the records of his college life are few.

It seems that while he was in College, a certain Peter Burr was entrusted by the elder Read to deal out John's spending money, and his MSS. Account Book (now in the Massachusetts Histori-



cal Society) enters charges for the usual necessities of a student, viz: "a pair of gloves, two pen knives, six pewter spoons, three "ink orns", four handkerchiefs and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. liquorish balls"; also a dozen pipes and beer and cider to the value of 9 shillings. The College Quarterly said he was a lively student. He once paid a fine of 7 sh. 9 pence; and one Quarter bill for commons and sizing was no less than £ 5 - 2 - 11 d. Years later, Read gave Thomas Prince a somewhat different impression of his undergraduate diversions, saying: "When I was a senior sophister at College in 1696, there being a day of prayer, I and several others went from College to attend the exercise, and after a day of solid preaching and praying in relays, Mr. Torrey stood up and prayed nearly two hours, but all his prayer so entirely new and various, without tautologies, so exceedingly pertinent, so regular, so natural, so free, lively and affecting that towards the end of his prayer, hinting at still new and agreeable scenes of thought, we could not help wishing him to enlarge upon them. But time obliged him to close to our regret; we could gladly have heard him an hour longer."

This detached evaluation shows the analytical quality of our subject's mind. He probably adopted a similar style, as he had a very engaging manner in the pulpit, in which he soon found himself. Returned from College, and following the loss of his father, John Read within the year was preaching at Waterbury, though not quite 20 years of age. To be sure, Waterbury was not the industrial city that we know. It had a ratable estate of only £ 1700 but the Town "voted a rate of 3 half pennies in the Pound" to defray his



salary, and twice renewed the offer of a permanent Pastorate -- each time declined, although the nominal position continued until December 29, 1699 when he resigned. On November 12th next, he joined the First Church of Hartford where he served three years, again declining to be regularly installed; also declining an invitation to serve in Windsor, Connecticut.

Now in 1703, it happened that the people of old Stratford had occasion to supply their pulpit and voted "that Nathaniel Sherman proceed forthwith with all convenient speed to Hartford and endeavor, by all lawful means, the obtaining of Rev. John Read to supply the vacancy in the ministry made by the decease of the Rev. Isreal Chauncey, and that he be voted £40 in money and £ 6 in firewood for half a year and that the Committee take care of transporting Mr. Read's family and find suitable habitation for him." This referred to his wife Ruth Talcott, daughter of Col. John Talcott (later to be Governor of Connecticut), and by this time a daughter Ruth, and a son John Read Jr., had been born; (this is Col. John Read of Lonetown, born 1701, died 1786). In all there were at least eight children most of whom married in Boston and lived in the East and in Halifax and Rhode Island. At Stratford young Rev. John Read served the Congregational Church faithfully for three years; but in 1706 the Town and Church were rocked to their common foundation.

The faint specter of the English Established Church, which had already set up in Massachusetts in the King's chapel by Edmond Andros, now appeared on the Connecticut horizon. Newly arrived



Englishmen knew nothing of the New England Church. They retained a traditional affection for the home church, although "worshipping in faithful spirit with the dissenting communities amongst whom their lot was cast". Meanwhile, ministers about to be ordained were examining the doctrinal fundamentals. Knowing the judicial mind of our subject, we may understand his more tolerant idea of religious freedom - scarcely formulated; (this was 80 years before our Bill of Rights). He probably defended the right of both churches to exist; (both Maryland and Rhode Island had more tolerance).

Aware of considerable criticism going on behind his back, he hailed certain members of his congregation before a church council for "contempt of him and his ministry". The usual remedy of Town Meeting and a day of fasting and prayer resulted in the appointment of the Reverends Pierpont, Andrews, Chauncey and Webb to look into the charge of the young minister. These exonerated the Town and Church saying: "they had found no indication of anything offensive to Mr. Read except the intimation that he had made overtures to join the Episcopal Church".

At this moment came the Rev. George Muirson from England, a missionary, accompanied by Col. Heathcote, who rode fully armed into the midst of a gathering of the Church, nearly overturning the faithful Elders who could not possibly at that date visualize the existence of two doctrinally opposed faiths in the same community at one time. Mr. Read now openly expressed his preference for the Episcopal form of worship and withdrew as his parishioners viewed it "into the papistical ways of Muirson's people". Many expected him



to become an English Churchman. Col. Heathcote wrote back to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that "Mr. Read of this place is inclinable to come over to our church and being by far the most ingenious man amongst them, would be very capable to serve the church".

Contrary, however, to the general impression, young Mr. Read gave up his clerical career entirely, not, however, before preaching the First Congregational Church sermon delivered at New Milford whither he had been drawn (says Orcutt) by ownership of land and had built a house. Whether young John Read had been studying law during his years of ministry or not, it seemed amazing that he should have qualified so soon, as early as May in 1709, at the New London, Connecticut Bar. He shortly became Prosecuting Attorney for New Milford in an action against a Stratford Company for trespass -- trespass on a large tract of land at Wiantenock, which he stated "belonged to ye Inhabitants of Milford and included certain land of his own". He had been defending his own land for some time evidently.

The same gifts of expression which had made him sought after as a minister now served him in the court room. The jury found for the plaintiff. The case being carried to the Governor and his Assistants, Read was awarded treble damages and costs. This dispute carried on for some time. Fifteen times it was brought up and each time Attorney Read, "Queen's Counselor", won the case. The sixteenth trial lost the land to the claimants! This reversal was



## CORRECTION TO H. B. AULT'S "JOHN READ, GENT.", 1697

The parentage of the immigrant Baldwin brothers, Nathaniel, Timothy and Joseph, as given in the chart included in the subject pamphlet is incorrect.

APUKE

The first five children of the eight children listed were those of Richard and Ellen (Apuke) Baldwin as indicated. However, the last three were great grandchildren of Richard's brother, John Baldwin of La Hale (Hayle).

C. C. Baldwin's "Baldwin Genealogy" shows Richard Baldwin of Cholesbury (husband of Isabel and father of Nathaniel, Timothy and Joseph) to be the son of Richard (II) and grandson of Richard (I) and Ellen Baldwin.

After modern research in England, Herbert Furman Seversmith's contemporary work corrects the lineage to read as follows:

- A. Robert Baldwin born ca 1475 died post 1528 of Dundridge and Aston Clinton, Co. Bucks. His wife was Agnes, daughter of William Delte of Rickmarworth, Co. Herts. In addition to John next, he was the father of Richard of Dundridge who married Ellen.
- B. John Baldwin of La Hale (Hayle). Died 1565. Wife unknown.
- C. Thomas Baldwin of Pypers, Chesham, Bucks, died in 1570 leaving wife Joane and several minor children. Joane was perhaps Joan Tyndall, as Thomas refers to his brother John Tyndall.
- D. Richard Baldwin born Pypers, Chesham, Bucks circa 1575, died 1615. Resided Cholesbury, Bucks. He married Agnondesham (Amersham) 31 May 1593 Isabella Harding.
- E. Nathaniel Baldwin, Timothy Baldwin and Joseph Baldwin, immigrants to Milford, Connecticut. Nathaniel's daughter, Deborah, married William Read, and was the mother of John Read.

February, 1953



Both left wills naming children - The records of the last three cease in England and appear ~~early~~ in 1822, 1823, 1824.



References and Authorities Quoted

1. George B. Reed - "Sketch of the Life of The Hon. John Read of Boston" (Boston, 1903) p. 5
2. Peter Burr - MSS. Account Book - Mass. Hist. Soc. p. 19-39
3. Hugh Adams - See in Harvard Archives
4. Henry Bronson - History of Waterbury - 1858
5. Memorial Edition of Hartford County - by Trumbull
6. History of Stratford and Bridgeport - by Orcutt p. 296-7 Vol. 1
7. Biographical Sketches of Eminent Lawyers - by Knapp - p.157-161
8. History of Harvard University - by Josiah Quincy
9. Annals of King's Chapel - by Henry W. Foote
10. Winthrop Papers - in Mass. Hist. Society - vol. 5 - 406-418-426
11. John Adams - Works - III-533 and IX-572
12. Life of James Otis - by Wm. Tudor (Boston 1823) p. 12
13. Jacob W. Reed - "The Reed Family" (Boston 1861) - p. 209
14. Boston Weekly Post Boy - Feb. 13, 1749 - p. 2/1
15. Fiske's New England Colonies
16. Land Records of Newtown, Conn. - vol. 1
17. History of Redding, Conn., by Todd
18. W. A. Beers - "John Reed, the Colonial Lawyer" - Fairfield County Historical Society
19. Archives of Harvard College - Mr. C. K. Skipton Custodian
20. Addison Gallery of Art - Phillips Andover Academy, Andover, Massachusetts



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W O R K S

Various legal papers of Read are preserved in the court files of Connecticut and Massachusetts. The M. H. S. has a number of miscellaneous papers and letters, some of which are in the Winthrop, MSS. and not listed in the general catalogue. Some of his writings have been printed in the following places: 6 Coll. M. H. S. v (Winthrop Papers); Law Papers, III (Coll. Conn. Hist. Soc. xv); Talcott Papers II (Coll. Conn. Hist. Soc. v); Edmund F. Slafter, John Checkley (Prince Society, 1897), II, 38-44; Jeremy Belknap, History of New Hampshire (Boston, 1792), III, 359-65; George B. Reed, John Read (ed. 1903).

His only printed work is A LATIN GRAMMAR .....Boston, 1736.  
pp. (2), 34, 20. AAS, BA, CHS.



may be Wm Jr b 1655  
or —  
(may be son of Thos.  
who d. 1667 ±  
his Invelitory  
Essex Invtctd  
vol 11 —

Wm Read of Milford & Fairfield Ct. (may be son of Thos.  
who d. 1667 ±

b —

(1) —

= (2) date: —

Webbush Baldwin

b  
d —

(dau. of → Nathaniel Bald  
+ (2<sup>nd</sup>) wife: Joanna —  
— widow of Richard Wistcot  
of Fairfield Ct.)

4 West  
Childs

→ 3 children -

Sara

Abigail —

Hon John Read —

b (29 Jan. 1679-80,  
old cal.)

75031749  
14 FEB 1748 alt  
120

→ where (?)

H.C. - class of 1697 -

He studied for the ministry -  
(under whom - ?)

her sister  
Hannah  
= Nathan  
Gold -  
(Gould)

lived in Boston after  
his death - with her  
son - Wm Read &c.

(1710-1780) ✓  
(Hanover + Queen Sts)

wrote a Latin grammar 1734 - Established  
Civil & legal codes in Mass. - (N. Eng Hist  
Magazine April 1877)  
Atty General - (?) of Mass - (?)

N. Eng Hist  
Magazine  
Feb 1877

p. 207



Col. John Read of Duncton, Manor Redding Ct - son of Hon. John Read 1680 - 1748  
and wife Ruth - Talbot -  
b 1701 - Hartford Conn. (bro of Ruth - wife of Rev. Nath. Dunn -  
d 1786

Mary Hawley - of Capt. John Hawley and wife Deborah (Pierce?)  
1698 - 1748  
= 2 - w 1750 - - Sarah Bradley (1726-1774) of Greenfield Hills  
died 1750 - - }



Miscellaneous Deeds — (John  
Read —)

from Court House Records —  
by H.B.A.



Deed - Book A Fairfield Conn - p 252 - a 188

Gift of land from W<sup>m</sup> Read to son: John Read - 1693

For good causes and considerations moving me y<sup>to</sup>  
I grant to my daughters Sara and Abigail the los  
called Hedges Lot situate in Fairfield - to graunt  
about 5 acres bounded on ye north west by the la  
of Cornelius Hull on ye South East by ye Highway  
and ye north east by land of Joseph Rowland,  
I also give them the Meadows at Sascoe creek  
and all other lands meadows house barn orchard  
and fences unto my loving son, John Read.

Nathan Gold - Assistant

William Read

Sept 29-1693



Hartford Conn

One deed to part of Sonctown Manor —

consisted of a former Colony grant in 1687- Oct 13 in the writing of Secy Hezekiah Willis — to Mr Cyprian Nichols

1687:-

At a General Court held at Hartford

" to Mr Cyprian Nichols 200 acres where he can find it  
the land not to prejudice any former grants etc

1711 - March 1 -

Caleb Stanley

Then laid out ye grant of 200 acres, granted by  
ye General Court to Capt. Cyprian Nichols Oct 13-1687  
follows:-

Beginning at a great Chestnut tree, marked  
on ye south and west sides and T. R. set upon it  
- (at the sound end of Wolf Ridge)

Thomas Hoyt

Daniel Taylor

Entered folio 14

Secy Neg. Wyllys, - Secy

Mar. 21 - 1711 -

Surveyors of ye Town of Danbury

The next two deeds were May 7-1700 - to Mr. Daniel Hillson  
and Oct 10-1706 - to Mr. Richard Hubbard

side by side with the preceding 200 acres

and 100 acres May 7-1700 - all in one piece etc

Grants were purchased by Mr. John Read, before they  
were laid out -



1677 June 20 -

Thomas Skedmore Sen<sup>r</sup> to Daniel Westcott - (Stepson?)  
 - at the expiration of the natural life of Thos. Skedmore, one  
 house lot with dwelling house, barn orchard yards  
 fence trees and all the parts and appurtenances of  
 them - situated in Fairfield 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  acres more or less  
 by estimation. - bounded as follows: -  
 on the north east by land of Esb<sup>r</sup> Wakeman  
 N. W. " Joshua Knowles  
 S. W. " Henry Rowland  
 S. E. by the Highway -

1679

Daniel Westcott to Richard Hubble - 11-June-1679 vol A-2  
 Bill of Sale --

- practically same as above - same boundaries -  
 identifying the same land -  
 "not to enter upon - until the expiration of the natural life  
 of Thos. Skedmore, excepting that part which Thomas  
 Skedmore formerly gave William Read and is now  
 the property of Richard Hubble - The deed also in-  
 cluded a share in the Common - which rights per-  
 tained to same lots.

Sale - 16 Mar 1686 - Recorded 16 June 1687 - vol A - p 291

Sargent Richard Hubble of Fairfield - to William Read

Bounded as follows: - on the N.E. by land of the heirs of Esb<sup>r</sup>  
 on the n.w. by land of Joshua Knowles, <sup>Wakeman, decd</sup>

S. W. " Henry Rowland

S. E. by the Highway



Land owned by Richard Westcott who married Joan — who  
in Block & Parcel F.

mar (2) Nathaniel  
Baldwin

and (3)

Thos Skidmore

Affidavit by Nathaniel Baldwin — (A 56)

Dated 13 Jan 1653 — States that he

acquired these several parcels by marriage with Joanna his  
own house and home lot — being in quantity  $2\frac{1}{2}$  acres  
more or less and bounded as follows: —

on the n.e. by land of John Nichols

„ „ N.W. „ „ Simon Hart.

„ „ S.W. „ „ Henry Rowland

„ „ S.E. „ „ by the Highway

a deed of gift dated 20 April 1675 — vol A 214

Thomas Skidmore to William Read

William Read hath by gift from Thomas Skidmore, (note:  
wife's step father) a small piece of land on his home lot  
facing upon the street being in quantity 2 rods in  
breadth and 6 rods in length, and is bounded as follows

on the n.e. by land of Eason Drakeman

on the S.E. „ „ the Highway

on the other two sides by Thomas Skidmore's land

— an abatement noted in the above also — omitted here.

Deed of Sale — recorded 1680 — vol A p 258

Wm Read to Richard Hubble — Wm Read sells his interest in  
small parcel on the home lot that sometime was Thos. Skidmore  
being 12 rods, — 2 in breadth and 6 rods in length — same  
boundaries — to be possessed as (stipulated) — in a sale Dec 11-16



Sept 19- 1723 -

Deeds - Fairfield Co. - vol 4 - 532-3

John Read - of Lonetown - & his son John Read - of Lonetown -  
Know all men by these presents, - that I, John Read of Lonetown  
gent. - in consideration of my natural love and affection to my  
oldest son John Read and for his - - -  
Do give and grant to him one half of my manor of Lonetown  
being the whole of the lands that I have enclosed and two  
hundred acres near ye South west corner of outside fence  
Two hundred acres once intended to be land - East north and to  
of my outside fence and new message part of my half  
the whole of my manor of Providence lying in Newtown and  
in the tenor of William Perce containing about two  
hundred acres already laid out and so many acres  
of my Newtown division of land not yet laid out as  
conveniently be laid in good form to the two hundred acre  
aforesaid with appurtenances - giving him power (or  
either of ye said mentioned two parcels of land of  
two hundred acres (south?)(each?) - to remove from my pla  
above mentioned, - Exchange and take up in any other  
place or places, as occasion or discretion may require  
to have and to hold ye above given and granted  
premises with appurtenances to him my son John  
his heirs and assigns forever - two thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) thereof  
to him John and the other  $\frac{1}{3}$  part to the use of my  
loving wife, Mrs. Ruth Read, during her natural life and  
after her death - to go to John - laid out at Lonetown  
above mentioned as so much sold at vendue sale in  
Fairfield for which I paid Major (sic) Burr 6 lbo  
besides considerable to Lieutenant Hubble and Maj  
Burr - then (they?) made a memorandum of my pitchin



Continuation of Deed - John Read to John Read Jr Page 2-

for it as above - but since the most part of the  
said land is not quite right fully taken up and  
said 200 acres at the south west corner of my  
outside fence - in part impinging, I am informed  
on Capt. Wakeman's land - so much therefore must  
be taken up also. Where now I am witness  
of the aforesaid written I have herewith - set  
my hand and seal this 19<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1723.

John Read -

19 Sept 1723

Also

20 Sept 1723 - Power of Attorney granted - from same to son  
(vol 4 - pages 532-533 -

Fairfield County - Land Records - ) -

in the presence of Joseph Talcott and Eunice Talcott  
acknowledged at Hartford Sept 20-1723 -  
recorded Fairfield Conn.



(John Read of Suffolk Co Mass -)

1728-

D This Indenture of portion (partition?) - made the Eleventh  
of November, 1728 between John Read of Boston, gent. &  
John Read of Somers Town Yeoman, -

Whereas the parties hold ye Manner of Loantown (sic  
in - - to them and their heirs - and are minded to  
divide of the Northernmost parcel of it containing  
about six hundred acres in one entire piece of  
ground with buildings and fences thereon -

- therefore they for themselves and their respective heirs  
mutually grant and agree that there shall be a line  
drawn thro tract of land beginning at a grante  
rock at the south west corner of my little meads  
etc -

dated Nov 11-1728 Boston Suffolk Co Mass.

Recorded Nov. 2-1731

Witnesses : W<sup>m</sup> Read  
Ruth Read

Signed  
John Read -



Suffolk County Mass. Deeds -

Wm T A Fitzgerald - Reg -  
Pemberton Square Boston

Grantor : -

John Read - to 11 - grantees - Books - 36-46-57-8-68-7,

Grantee from 10 - grantors - Books - 36-42-3-6-8-57



(John Read, 1697)

H 14 G 300

W<sup>m</sup> Read - (called son of W<sup>m</sup> - who d. 1659 Norwalk - earlier in Sta  
(not established by me) - a Thos Read of record Milford Ct  
1646.

b  
d - (will) 1697 -  
Fairfield Ct

(name Reed - seems to appropriate some)  
have not isolated line to my satisfaction -  
(see Savage)

= (1) - Deborah Baldwin b 1652 - dau. of Nath. Baldwin + 2<sup>nd</sup> wife : -  
d -

see Baldwin  
General  
(- gr dau. of Richard & Ellen who left  
wills in Bucks Co Eng -)

Joanna - widow of Richard  
Westcott sometime of Wethersfield + d.  
72

= (2) Mary Brinsmade (Bostwick)  
(widow of Jno " "  
+ dau of Jno Brinsmade)  
she d 1704

Joanna = (3) Thos Skidmore - who  
sold land to W<sup>m</sup> Read in 1673  
prob. Deborah's share of f

Joanna had 4 Westcott children +  
Nathaniel - = (1) Abig Camp - d. 16  
in Milford -  
+ had 4 Baldwin children -  
half + step brothers + sisters of  
Deborah Read.

3 ch :

Sara

Abigail

John Read (of Lonestown 1714-22)

b Jan 29 - 1674-80

d - Feby 1749 - ae 70 in Boston

= Zachary  
Ferris  
of New Milford

= ca 1699 ± Ruth - Talcott -  
1678-  
1775  
of Lt Col Jno + 2<sup>nd</sup> wf Mary Cook  
Step sister of Gov. Joseph - Talco  
(son of Lt. Col Jno + 1<sup>st</sup> wf.  
Helena Wakeman)

+ buried in Read lot  
Redding Center

\*

Ruth -

Col John Read

Rachel

Hezekiah

Judge W<sup>m</sup>

Mary

Abg.

b. 1700 -  
Hartford Ct

b 1701 - Hartford

b 1703

b

1710 -

b 1716

d. Aug 8-1766 - ae 60

d - 30 Oct. 1786 - ae 85

d -

1780

= Sep 14-1737 - by Rev Mr Hobart  
Rev. Nath. Hume of Fairfield  
(Yale 1733)

= (1) Mary Hawley

(family)

of

(as you  
has  
thee

1<sup>st</sup> pastor in  
Redding  
Congr. church -

= 2 - in 1750 - Deborah

data

Boston

\* he may have died in Boston

(1726-1774) of Greenfield

→ issue : Hezekiah etc.)

issue : - W<sup>m</sup>

b 1730 - d 1808  
11 Feb  
ae 78

etc.

(see next)

(?) Why not one  
named Wm  
for grf Read



Col. John Read - (1701-1786)

of 4<sup>th</sup> Regt. Conn. militia but too old to serve in the R

(see Toold's History of Redding Ct)

= (1) Mary Hawley (1698-1748) (+ Gruman's Soldiers of Revolution (Re))  
— had by 1<sup>st</sup> wife — 2 sons — (3 daws: — not sure of these)

(1) Wm Read — b 1730      2<sup>nd</sup> (d) (2)

d — Feb 11-1808 ae 78 (g.s.)

= Dec 11-1753-

Sara Hawley (of Redding)  
V.R.

→ Wm Jr — — (not followed up)  
(who had a  
son Chas. b 1785)  
etc.

Capt. Salmon

Read

b 1739

d — Jan 15-1786 ae 61 — (g.s.)

Capt 10<sup>th</sup> Co — (Capt Clift's Co.) Regiment

= Huldah Bradley  
d 1821

Deborah = 1775 Thos Be

Rush = Jer. Mead

Mary = Jno Harp

(son) Ensign Salmon Read

(may be others?)

b 1759 — d Oct 3-1846 ae 87 (g.s.)

= 1780 = (1) — Huldah Gray — who d. June 27-1810 ae 49 —

= (2) in 1811 — Hannah Bassett 1786-1870 (g.s.)

→ ? (of Benj. of Derby Ct)

(6 ch.  
by 1<sup>st</sup> wif.)

- 1- Aaron Read b 1781 -
- 2- Clarissa .. 1795
- 3- Henry
- 4- Betsy
- 5- Samuel
- 6- Caroline

(and see over  
for 2<sup>nd</sup> m<sup>age</sup>  
of Capt. Jno)







Read, John

1697

1911

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY CLIPPING SHEET

## WARE CELEBRATION OPENS.

### READ MEMORIAL UNVEILED.

### EXERCISES AT THE OLD CENTER.

#### ADDRESS BY REV ARTHUR CHASE.

Rev. R. D. Sawyer, H. C. Davis and A. L. Harwood Also Speak—The Excellent Loan Exhibit.

The old common before the historic church at Ware Center, which down through the years has seen the coming and going of generations, which has seen so many neighborly gatherings after meeting, has seen the happy throngs come from all the country-side to make merry at a wedding and the same ones gather to mourn a neighbor and relative, which has felt the martial tread of soldiers being trained for the wars, yesterday looked upon a slight pile like of which it had never yet seen. Here on this common gathered the people of the present-day Ware. They came from the farm and from the loom, from the counting-rooms and the store, from far and near to do honor to the man who once owned the land all about and who in his lifetime parted with only this one parcel which went to make a site for the church and the common. The men of to-day in whose minds was born the idea of celebrating Ware's 150th anniversary had decided that a recognition though tardy, should be made of the life of John Read and his benefactions to the Ware River parish of which he was the patron and proprietor.

Rev. R. D. Sawyer's Address.

The exercises began at 8 o'clock with selections by an orchestra. After singing by school children Rev. Roland D. Sawyer, pastor of the Ware Center church, gave the unveiling address, taking as his subject, "The cross-roads." His remarks were as follows:

Into the great pulsating life of our nation no better blood has ever flowed than that flowing from the cross-roads rural life. From Maine to California, from the great lakes to the gulf, you will find everywhere the sons and daughters of the cross-roads holding positions of usefulness, trust and honor. And into that great army of countryside men and women, Ware Center has sent its quota. This little parish has poured forth into the great world on-

side; both useful privates for the ranks and file and leaders for positions of eminence. In the world of business, names may be found adorning city blocks that once were crawled on the seats of Sondre's school. The professional world has honorable men in its ranks that were recruited from the lads who one time ran barefooted, after the cows along these roads. Men who as boys and youths held the plow and dropped the corn in these fields have passed out into the larger world to argue the subtle questions of the law, ease the pain-taxed body, plan engineering feats or proclaim the word of God. In the ranks of the united democracy this parish sent men, both to be the private's market and to lash a leader's sword. And into the greatest and most important host of all, the industrial ranks, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, have men and women from this parish gone. And today many a native son of this place is the skilled manipulator of the great machine whose tireless muscles of iron and steel carries on the world's production. Arms reared and given strength on these hills have plied the pick in the mines beyond the Rockies; the broad, barren prairies of the West have been turned into fields of flowing grain under the magic touch of brawn and skill that went out from here; the wild waves of the ocean have rocked the mariner, who as a child was rocked in a Ware Center cradle.

In the great movements for human betterment and reform, from the Revolution and Shay's rebellion down to the present rumble of unrest at social injustice, voices on behalf of humanity have gone up from this place. Not only those who have gone out from here, but those who have remained to bend their backs to the burdens of life, and toll give us evidence that the native of this parish may feel like the Apostle Paul, that he is a native of "no mean city."

To-day, standing on the threshold of the exercises that mark the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of Ware as a town, we are to uncover a permanent memorial to the man whose wisdom and heart did more to make this parish possible than any other man of his own or of a later day. We are to unveil here at this cross-roads a monument, a memorial in stone and bronze, to testify for all time that the citizens of Ware to-day appreciate the work and honor the memory of John Read, the first benefactor of the town, the founder of the Manour of Peace.

The name of John Read must never cease to be honored in the Ware river valley, and so standing here on this historic spot, this church common, hallowed ground of the old-time Manour of Peace, I do as the chairman of the committee having these dedication exercises in charge, a spokesman for the general committee and those citizens who conceived the idea of this monument; as pastor of the church that occupies the land given by John Read; and above all as a representative of all the citizens of the town, both present and past, in this multifold capacity, I do now commit to the future citizens of this town, to all who shall anywhere honor human worth, this boulder dedicated to John Read and his



### Manour of Peace.

#### The Memorial Unveiled.

Following the address of Mr Sawyer  
bree little daughters of Ware Center,  
Misses Rachel Cummings, Rosalind Sawyer  
and Rose McManus, stepped forth  
and drew the cord that held the veiling  
in place. Mr Sawyer's remarks and the  
unveiling were followed by a selection by  
the orchestra, after which there were  
dedicatory addresses by Henry C. Davis  
of Ware and Albert L. Harwood of Bos-  
ton. Both men felicitated the residents  
of Ware town on their achievements and  
told them always to foster there the  
spirit which had made to-day's events  
possible.

#### Rev. Arthur Chase's Historical Ad- dress.

These speakers were followed by Rev  
Arthur Chase, rector of Trinity Epi-  
iscopal church at Ware, whose historical ad-  
dress was in part as follows:—

It is certainly a matter of pride for  
any town to be associated with the name  
of an eminent man. In some instances  
such association is through the accident  
of birth, in others of residence. In ours  
it comes through a double tie—that of  
ownership and that of benefaction. John  
Read was the proprietor of this great  
realm, the Manour of Peace, and the bene-  
factor of Ware River parish. John Read,  
as the fine bronze plate upon this boulder  
tells you, was born in the year 1680 on  
the 14th day of February of that year in  
the colony of Connecticut. He was the  
son of Samuel Read and a grandson of  
John Read, who came from England with  
the great fleet in 1630 and settled in  
Massachusetts. At the age of 17 he gradu-  
ated from Harvard college and, following  
the traditions of that institution of learning,  
prepared himself for the sacred ministry  
for which work he was ready when  
but 18 years of age. The field of his  
ministry was in the colony of Connect-  
icut, where he served for eight years,  
holding charges at Waterbury, East Hart-  
ford and Stratford. Youthful though he  
was, he made himself a name in his call-  
ing. In the old parish records of Strat-  
ford, which I have examined, it is stated  
that the committee sent to East Hart-  
ford to extend him a call was instructed  
to employ every reasonable means to in-  
duce the young man to accept the Strat-  
ford charge. He was already at this  
time married to Ruth Talcott, sister of  
Gov Joseph Talcott and daughter of Ltent-  
Col John Talcott, who commanded the  
Connecticut forces in King Philip's war.  
But it was impossible for John Read,  
with keen business ability, to subordi-  
nate his administrative talents to ministerial  
work. Besides being a clergyman he was  
inevitably a man of affairs. Having been  
drawn unwillingly into lawsuits concerning  
his title to certain lands, he became deeply  
interested in the study of law, and  
soon decided to devote himself to its sci-  
ence and practice. His abandonment of  
the ministry for that purpose need not  
be regarded by us as in the least re-  
prehensible, for, according to the Congre-  
gational policy of that time, a man was  
a minister only while holding a charge by  
virtue of his ordination at the hands of  
those over whom he was placed. So  
when he ceased to be a minister of the  
Stratford congregation he became, after  
his dismissal, a layman again. The fact  
is that, having chosen the ministry at 17,  
he discovered, on reaching maturity, that

his fully rounded usefulness would find  
a wider field in another profession. Cer-  
tain it is that he remained to the end of  
his life the finest example of a Christian  
gentleman.

Mr Read's superior abilities soon at-  
tracted attention and he rose rapidly in  
his profession. In 1712, when Queen  
Anne was upon the British throne, he  
was made queen's attorney for the colony  
of Connecticut, an office which he held for  
several years. During this time he lived  
upon an estate which he named Lonest-  
town, and to which he added from time  
to time by the purchase of lands from his  
Indian neighbors. One such tract was  
known as "Chickens's farm," after the  
shiftless Indian named "Chickens," from  
whom he bought it. These Connecticut  
estates were all in the neighborhood of  
Stratford and from them was formed the  
present town of Redding, or Reading.

John Read's services to Connecticut  
were many and great, but in 1721 he de-  
cided to remove to the Massachusetts Bay  
colony, the former home of his father  
and grandfather. His son, John, Jr., and  
his daughter, Ruth, remained upon the  
Connecticut estates.

Upon his arrival in Boston, Mr Read at  
once received the recognition that his  
character and legal attainments merited.  
Clients flowed to his office, and within a  
short time he was appointed attorney  
general of the province. In 1738 he was  
elected by the voters of Boston to repre-  
sent them in the Great and General Court,  
becoming thus the first lawyer to sit in  
that august body. Mr Read's legal at-  
tainments received from his contempo-  
raries and from the generations that fol-  
lowed full recognition. Both Massachu-  
setts and Connecticut employed him upon  
the various boundary disputes of the pe-  
riod. He was regarded as an authority  
on finance, shaping much of the legisla-  
tion of Massachusetts during those years  
of financial difficulty, laboring continually  
for the preservation of the credit of  
the colony. Nor is his fame altogether  
forgotten even in these days. When  
making inquiries concerning an old prov-  
ince law I was casually told that probably  
John Read was largely instrumental in  
its framing.

In 1716, while still a citizen of the Con-  
necticut colony, John Read bought the  
tract of land in the midst of which we are  
now standing, over 11,000 acres in ex-  
tent, which he proceeded to develop after  
the fashion of an English gentleman's  
country estate, and to which he gave the  
poetic name of "the Manour of Peace." The  
alarms of the Indian wars that had  
devastated Brookfield on the east and  
Hadley to the westward had ceased to  
sound. In this portion of Massachusetts  
there was a haven for a portion at least  
of those multitudes whose spirit could no  
longer brook the troublous ways of the  
old world and who were coming to our  
shores from England, Scotland and Ire-  
land, to seek the peaceful habitation that  
corrupt politics and religious differences  
denied them there. The Manour of Peace,  
a land of forest and meadow, of hills  
and vales, of springs and of water brooks.  
Within 10 years of his purchase Mr  
Read had begun developing the tract. Un-  
fortunately the records of those days are  
meager, very meager; but certainly it  
was not long before the land was dotted  
with tenants cultivating farms which they  
held under lease at most reasonable terms,  
grinding their corn and rye at the mill.



which sprang up beside the water courses. Twenty-five shillings a year gave a man 100 acres, together with many common privileges enjoyed by the tenants as a whole.

Politically the Manour was a part of Kingston, and for religious privileges the settlers looked to Palmer Center, as it is now called, where a church was early established. But as soon as sufficient families had settled upon the Manour and adjacent lands to the east, a petition, signed by 30 householders, was sent to the General Court, praying for the establishment of a new and independent parish. This was in 1742. John Read's name "for the petitioners" headed the list of signatures, and added to its weight and dignity. He was the "friend at court," the patron and proprietor, to whom the people constantly looked for assistance and advice. The petition being granted in due time, the proprietor took measures to establish the church on a good foundation. After taking up his residence at Boston, Mr Read had associated himself with the church of England and became a vestryman of King's Chapel, but he was none the less concerned for the welfare of this parish to be established under the Congregational polity. He gave a hundred acres to be used as a glebe, half a mile west of here, at the center of the Manour, and offered other encouragements toward the building of a church and the settling of a minister, promises which were fulfilled by his heirs after his death. He himself did not live to see the church building erected, for he died in February 14, 1748, old style, or 1749, as we reckon to-day, aged 60 years, and was buried in the crypt of King's Chapel, Boston. It was two years later, in 1751, that our first minister was installed, an occasion graced by the presence of Mr Read's children, who took the long journey from Boston or Providence, or Stratford, Ct., to show their interest in the proceedings.

It was not the wish of our first inhabitants to place the church upon the lot which their patron had provided for the purpose. I am sure that all will agree that this site here in the pleasant valley by the brookside was far more eligible. Mr Read's heirs met the wishes of the people, and gave them this spot, a common, a site for the meeting-house, and a plot for a burial place. The first meeting-house was placed east and west, like the churches of the old country, following the same sentiment that prompted the burial of the dead with their feet toward the east, that on the resurrection morning they might arise facing the sun of righteousness. So also the congregation worshipped, looking with expectant eyes toward that part of the heavens, whence ancient types foreshadowed that the Judge should come. Neither John Read nor any member of his immediate family, so far as I have been able to learn, ever dwelt upon the Manour lands.

With the death of John Read there died also the hope of maintaining the Manour as a single estate. The first proprietor never sold an acre of the land, having parted with only the one tract of 100 acres which he devoted to religious uses. Six years passed, during which the heirs were developing a new policy, settling on a division of the territory among themselves in order that each share might be disposed of as should suit the several owners. Gradually the leases bought the farms, new occupants appeared upon the scene, and in the lapse

of years the traditions of the Manour were forgotten. The very name of the proprietor has long been strange to the ears of the townspeople. We revive his name and his fame to-day and especially the name which he gave to the estate, "The Manour of Peace."

Following Mr Chases's address the exercises were closed with singing and an orchestral selection. The committee in charge of the dedication exercises were: Rev. Roland D. Sawyer, chairman, Frank W. Harwood, George M. Sanford, Patrick J. McManus, J. Warren Cummings, Mrs A. G. Buffington, Miss Mary S. Rich and Miss M. R. Howard.

The boulder dedicated yesterday stands on the old common facing the cross-roads. It is a large rough stone and has on its face a beautiful bronze tablet which bears the inscription:—

To the honourable  
John Read  
1690-1749  
Proprietor of the Manour of Peace  
Benefactor of Ware River Parish  
This memorial  
is erected by the citizens of the town on the  
150th anniversary of its incorporation as a  
district  
1911.

Springfield (Mass)  
Republican 9/3/11



7s 9d. He spent even more freely than his father's many acres would justify, one quarter-bill for commons and sizings being no less than 5/- 2s 11d. Peter Burr (A.B. 1690) was employed by the elder Read to deal out John's spending money, and in his account book John is charged with such articles as a pair of gloves, two penknives, six pewter spoons, three "inkorns," four handkerchiefs, and "1 1/2 lb Liquorish Balls." It is not clear whether John or his father consumed the three dozen pipes and beer and cider to the value of 9s.<sup>2</sup> With Collins and Southmayd he played a trick on their classmate, Hugh Adams, who with ready Celtic wit retorted in verse

Blest is the man who hath not lent  
To wicked Reed his ear.<sup>3</sup>

Years later Read gave Thomas Prince a somewhat different impression of his undergraduate diversions: "When I was senior sophomore at college in 1696, there being a day of prayer, kept by the association at Newtown . . . I and several others went from college to attend the exercise. . . ." After a day of solid preaching and praying in relays, "Mr. Torrey stood up and prayed nearly two hours; but all his prayer so entirely new and various, without tautologies, so exceedingly pertinent, so regular, so natural, so free, lively, and affecting, that towards the end of his prayer, hinting at still new and agreeable scenes of thought, we could not help wishing him to enlarge upon them. But time obliged him to close, to our regret; and we could gladly have heard him an hour longer."<sup>4</sup> Read did not take his second degree in course, and is first credited with it in the Triennial of 1721. No copy of the *Observations* of that year survives, but it is probable that he was not required to perform for the degree.

From Cambridge, Read went to preach at the little Connecticut town of Waterbury, then only fourteen years old and having a rateable estate of but 1700l. "Febeurary: 8: 1698/9 the town having by a comity giuen Mr. John Reed a Call to the wortke of the ministrey amongst us accept what they haue done in it and do now renew our call to him in order to the wortke of the ministrey a mongst us."<sup>5</sup> The town renewed the call on

<sup>2</sup> Peter Burr, Ms. Account Book, Mass. Hist. Soc., pp. 19, 39.

<sup>3</sup> See under Hugh Adams, above.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Anderson, *The Churches of Mianus* (New Haven, 1892), pp. 185-6.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Bronson, *History of Waterbury* (Waterbury, 1858), p. 212.



JOHN READ







HECKMAN  
BINDERY INC.



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INDIANA 46962



